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# CANADA'S GREEN PLAN IN BRIEF

*A summary of  
Canada's Green Plan  
for a healthy environment.*

*Our Green Plan for reversing the damage we are doing to  
our environment today, maintaining development tomorrow,  
and securing a healthy environment and a prosperous  
economy.*



Government  
of Canada

Gouvernement  
du Canada

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*This booklet is a summary of information drawn from a comprehensive document called Canada's Green Plan for a Healthy Environment.*

*The original Green Plan document was prepared by the Government of Canada and features details on a wide range of policies, programs and regulations. It was prepared after extensive, cross-country consultations in 1990 with thousands of citizens and stakeholder groups.*

*You can obtain a copy of Canada's Green Plan for a Healthy Environment by contacting one of the Environment Canada Communications Offices listed on the inside back cover, or by writing to:*

*Canada's Green Plan  
c/o Environment Canada  
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## ***Statement by The Prime Minister***

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As Canadians, we are the trustees of a unique, beautiful, and productive northern land. From the first native populations, to the European settlers who followed centuries later, Canada's natural environment has shaped the development of our character and spirit.

Today, Canada has blossomed from a country once dependent exclusively on natural resources into one of the world's great industrial nations.

The challenge we now face is to build upon our economic strengths in harmony with our environment, the basis of our health and prosperity. Every Canadian has a role to play in achieving this goal of sustainable development. When everyone contributes, everyone benefits.

The Green Plan expresses the Government's commitment to work with Canadians to manage our resources prudently and to encourage sensitive environmental decision-making.

Canada's Green Plan has implications that go beyond Canada's borders. The tools we develop and the programs we implement will make a contribution to global environmental health in this critical decade of the 1990's.

Canada's Green Plan for a healthy environment was developed in consultation with Canadians from all walks of life. Taking as a starting point the enormous respect that Canadians already have for their environment, the Green Plan will focus our national efforts. It will assist us as a nation in remedying the mistakes of the past while putting in place new steps to safeguard the environment.

Canada's Green Plan represents our commitment to our children and to future generations. The Green Plan will help Canada be a country which is both economically prosperous and environmentally healthy.

Brian Mulroney  
Prime Minister of Canada

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## *Statement by the Minister of the Environment*

This past summer I was privileged to travel throughout Canada as Environment Minister, listening to Canadians speak in public meetings about their concerns and their ideas for cleaning up and protecting their environment.

*Canada's Green Plan* for a healthy environment is the federal government's response to those concerns and ideas. In preparing this environmental action plan, we have worked hard to ensure the priorities expressed so eloquently by Canadians are reflected in the many Green Plan initiatives. In fact, 400 of the 500 recommendations made at the national wrap-up consultation have been incorporated into the Plan.

The resulting Green Plan is the most important environmental action plan ever produced in Canada. It is the source for more than 100 important and well-funded initiatives over the next five years. It is a *comprehensive* plan that deals with our environment as interrelated and whole. In addition to the \$1.3 billion the Government of Canada already spends annually on the environment, the Green Plan commits an additional \$3 billion in new funds over five years.

The Green Plan provides definite *targets and schedules* which will drive environmental initiatives within federal jurisdiction for years to come. These will also form the basis on which Canadians can judge our overall progress.

Finally, *Canada's Green Plan* is a statement of strengthened partnerships. Canadians have been involved in its development; they will continue to be involved in its implementation.

The Green Plan will help expand the energy, commitment and optimism that individual Canadians are already giving back to their environment. In fact, the overall impact of the Green Plan initiatives will be multiplied many times by the programs, policies and initiatives of our many partners — the provinces and territories, municipalities, industry and unions, environmental organizations, universities and schools and, most importantly, individual Canadians from coast to coast.

Canada's Green Plan is an investment in our planet, our nation and ourselves.

Robert R. de Cotret  
Minister of the Environment

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## *A Green Plan for Canada*

In your hands is a summary of *Canada's Green Plan for a healthy environment*.

It builds on the energy and commitment that men and women in Canada are already giving back to their environment.

It is the result of extensive consultations with Canadians on the kind of environmental action plan we really want.

Canadians clearly recognize the environmental challenges we face and believe it's time to do something about them. We want to improve our environment, *now*.

Now we are understanding how we have affected nature: acid rain, depleted ozone, overstuffed landfills, smog, poisoned lakes and seas, wildlife threatened with extinction.

We are also learning how pollution is affecting *us*. Our health is at risk and so is our economy if our environment continues to suffer.

Canadians told their federal government in national consultations that top priority must be given to ensuring the air we breathe, the water we drink and the food we eat will keep us healthy... and our children, and the generations of Canadians to come.

The message was loud and clear:

*Yes, we need a plan. Not just good intentions, vague promises or bandage solutions, but a real plan for action.*

The message was heard.

Here is Canada's Green Plan.

## *A Plan for Life*

It is called *Canada's Green Plan for a healthy environment*.

Our Green Plan is real, it is active, and it is a challenge. It has clear targets and the schedules to meet them. It comes with comprehensive new programs and regulations. It is a five-year action plan that will be reviewed annually.

Canada's Green Plan will accelerate our progress in *sustaining* our environment *and* our economy.

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*Sustainable development* is a new way of looking at what we do and how we do it. It means integrating the demands of our economy with the ability of our environment to sustain us today and for future generations.

## *A New Way of Thinking*

There is no easy route to sustainable development, no sudden dramatic solutions to the problems before us. No magic wands.

Beaches do not clean themselves instantly; our atmosphere will not be instantly free of harmful chemicals.

Environmental improvement requires persistence and dedication. It involves doing some big things and a lot of little things better.

For individuals it involves how to shop, how to deal with household waste, how to travel from place to place.

For companies it involves where to locate a plant, the kind of new machinery to buy, how much water, energy, paper and chemicals to use.

For governments it means properly planning policies, setting tough but realistic targets (with the budgets to meet them), and reporting on progress — regularly, publicly.

Everybody works or nothing works.

Sustainable development really means *planning for life*.

*Canada's goal: To secure for current and future generations a safe and healthy environment, and a sound and prosperous economy.*

# ***Life's Three Essentials***

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Our personal health and the health of our environment are bound tightly together.

We must have clean air, water and land — for our physical health and for our emotional well-being too.

This is why Canada's Green Plan includes the Health and Environment Action Plan, which will be released in 1991 by the Minister of National Health and Welfare. That plan will address health problems caused by environmental pollution.

It will assess the human health hazards from acid rain, air toxics, ground-level ozone (or smog), climate change and indoor air contaminants. It will deal with the safety of drinking water and the health effects of waste management practices.

It will focus particularly on the problems of those most at risk to environmental stress — our children, pregnant women, and native and northern peoples who live off the land.

It will also focus on the needs of individuals and communities for more information and awareness about the link between health and the environment. Programs will encourage and support individual and community action in this area.

*Canada's goal: Ensure that citizens today and tomorrow have the clean air, water and land essential to sustaining human health and the environment.*

In addition to the Health and Environment Action Plan, we must take steps to clean up and protect our water, land and air.

## ***Clean Water***

Water is the essence of all life.

Despite our seeming abundance, Canadians are not water-rich. Two-thirds of our fresh water flows northward, far away from the 80% of us who live within 300 kilometres of the U.S. border.

However, we use fresh water as if it were free and inexhaustible. In fact, we use an average of 350 litres a day per Canadian, which is about two and a half times as much water as the average European uses.

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Canada must ensure safe drinking water for the future. We must also clean up past mistakes, better protect our coastal and inland waters, and conserve our use of water in order to reduce our demands on nature.

Canada's Green Plan has detailed programs in all these important areas.

For example, it proposes a Drinking Water Safety Act and includes measures to support the clean-up of our valuable groundwater. It will also accelerate the provision of water and sewer systems to Indian reserves.

For the Fraser River and Burrard Inlet there will be a clean-up plan. With Green Plan initiatives the fish population in these waters will double.

Major programs are already cleaning up the Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence River. What is needed now is action to prevent future damage. To that end, Canada will work with the U.S. to develop an action plan for pollution prevention in the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River. The plan will be carried out in partnership with industry, communities and governments on both sides of the border.

Our Green Plan will also set up a Great Lakes Pollution Prevention Centre by 1992. Steps will be taken to prevent pollution in inland waters in Alberta and Manitoba.

Wiser water use will be encouraged through new environmental information and awareness programs.

We are also a saltwater nation. In fact we are stewards of the longest coastline in the world. Our three oceans contribute \$8 billion and more than a million jobs to our economy. We must protect these gifts of nature.

Effective now, Canada's Green Plan will set up a five-year Ocean Dumping Action Plan to prohibit ocean dumping of industrial waste and better control ocean disposal of dredged materials. It will ensure compliance with the new regulations for the ocean zones under our protection. And it will establish a national research and information program aimed at reducing the discharge of plastics and other long-lasting debris into our marine waters.

Important Atlantic harbours and coastal areas will be cleaned up as part of Green Plan activities.

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***Canada's goal: Protect and enhance the quality of our water resources and promote the wise and efficient use of our water.***

## ***Clean Air***

In summer, more than half of us are exposed to unhealthy quantities of ground-level ozone concentrates, which we commonly know as smog. It is a health hazard, and one of our most serious air quality problems.

Smog comes from a joining of two pollutants: nitrogen oxides ( $\text{NO}_x$ ) and volatile organic compounds (VOCs). They are produced by autos, industry and households.

Tougher emission standards have greatly reduced pollutants from leaded gasoline, sulphur dioxide and carbon monoxide. But little progress has been made against smog.

Canada's Green Plan includes measures to ensure that we all have clean air to breathe.

The Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment is finalizing a plan to control smog-causing emissions. Based on extensive consultations, the plan will reduce emissions in problem areas by 40 per cent by the year 2000.

Beginning in 1994, tighter emission standards will be phased in for new vehicles; by 1995, we will have a national agreement on what is ultimately necessary to achieve air quality standards for all of Canada.

While these steps are important, our Green Plan agrees with many Canadian experts that an "emission credit trading" program has the potential to accelerate our timetable for cleaner air far quicker than regulations. This system rewards companies that achieve emission reductions ahead of target, while punishing those that lag.

Our Green Plan will also set up a system to monitor (1) the impact of our national program and (2) the U.S. contribution to our smog problem.

***Canada's goal: Nation-wide reduction of the concentration of ground-level ozone (the main component of smog). We will reduce ozone concentrations to levels below the threshold at which the***

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*most susceptible segments of our population experience health effects from smog.*

### ***...and a Clean Land***

We now produce 30 million tonnes of garbage a year. Of the eight million tonnes of hazardous waste we generate, less than half is treated. The rest is dumped into landfills and sewers.

We are being challenged with two problems: reducing the waste we create today and better managing that which we already have produced.

Canada's Green Plan will help us meet these challenges.

Canada's Green Plan builds on the National Waste Reduction Plan, worked out by the federal and provincial governments, industry and environmental groups. The plan commits Canada to reducing solid waste by 50 per cent by 2000.

The plan is based on the four precepts of sound waste management. The four "Rs" are: Reduce, Re-use, Recycle and Recover.

Our Green Plan ensures that the federal government will put its own house in order. The federal government will put in place a plan to ensure its own operations meet the national target and schedule.

An Office of Waste Management to co-ordinate our national effort will be established.

By 1993, standards and regulations to reduce waste from packaging will be established.

Because we cannot continue to recycle or re-use materials if no one wants to use them, Canada's Green Plan will expand the National Waste Exchange Program. The program helps find market opportunities for the re-use of waste materials.

By 1992 our Green Plan will develop a computerized tracking system to monitor the movement of all hazardous waste both into and out of Canada.

By 1995, 30 high-risk waste sites will be cleaned-up.

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By 1996, the federal government will have destroyed all PCBs under federal jurisdiction and established mobile incinerators in Atlantic Canada, Quebec and Ontario.

Our Green Plan will set up guidelines for the safe management of hazardous waste streams, also by 1996.

*Canada's goal: Cut waste by 50% by the year 2000.*

## *Controlling Our Chemical Wastes*

We use over 20,000 chemicals in Canada. We add another one or two hundred every year. Most of these do not create environmental problems.

But some can. Each of us throws out an average of 23 kilograms of hazardous waste each year, from batteries to paints to cleaning solvents.

On a major scale, the Mississauga (Ontario) train derailment and the Saint-Basile-le-Grand (Quebec) PCB warehouse fire brought close to home the need for safe disposal of industrial hazardous waste.

We know that past actions have helped to reduce and control the danger. The Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System and the *Transportation of Dangerous Goods Act* are good examples. Forty per cent of federal PCB stocks have been safely destroyed. Clean-up of the Sydney Tar Ponds chemical dump site is under way.

These efforts are a helpful and important start.

What is needed now is even more effective control of the toxic substances our society uses. We need better controls from manufacturing of the toxic substance right through to its final disposal. (And meanwhile we must seek substitutes that are less harmful.)

Canada's Green Plan sets out a National Regulatory Action Plan for the control of toxic substances.

The process starts with identifying each substance, then measuring its degree of hazard, then developing a control plan. The Priority Substances List with 44 classes of the worst offenders has already been created. Assessment will be complete by 1994. The list will be reviewed and updated every three years.

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Over the next five years, the federal government will bring in strict controls for all toxic substances from major industrial sources: chemicals, effluent, wastes and emissions.

In 1991 new regulations to restrict harmful effluent from pulp and paper mills will be introduced.

Our understanding of toxic substances and their health risks will be improved. Canada's Green Plan commits us to developing a data base of hazardous pollutants used and released by industry and transport sources. A National Toxicology Network at Canadian universities will be established in 1992.

Our Green Plan will also address the new science of biotechnology. The benefits of biotechnology are unquestioned. But with those great benefits come great risks. Within five years standards and controls to prevent the accidental or deliberate release of genetically engineered organisms will be established.

By 1992, the *Canadian Environmental Protection Act* will require strict notification of all new biotech products before their release to the public.

*Canada's goal: Virtual elimination of discharges of persistent toxic substances into the environment.*

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# *Sustaining Our Renewable Resources*

## *Forests*

Forests are a key resource in our natural environment.

Forests play a major role in our planet's recycling of carbon, nitrogen and oxygen. They have a direct effect on temperature and rainfall.

They regulate both the quality and quantity of our fresh water. They are also beautiful.

Forestry is of overwhelming economic significance to Canada: it is number one! In 1987, this \$44.3-billion industry provided one job in every 15 and was the mainstay of 350 towns.

But there are concerns. Can we replace what we harvest? Can we maintain the forests' diversity? What do we do about the 6.9 per cent of our productive forests — 167,000 square kilometres — which are less than fully regenerated?

Can we sustain our forests for future generations?

Canada's Green Plan will provide the tools.

In partnership with landowners and managers, Forestry Canada will support the establishment of up to eight demonstration projects across the country; models of sustainable development. These will bring us living models of the very best in forestry practice, living laboratories of sustainable development at its best.

Insects and disease destroy 600,000 hectares of trees every year. Our Green Plan will promote environmental harmony by accelerating efforts to bring environmentally acceptable technology to bear on these twin problems.

Canadians will be provided with relevant, timely and authoritative information on the state of our valuable natural resource.

Our Green Plan will help maintain the diversity of our forests through a national forest seed and gene bank. In cooperation with the provinces, the federal government will encourage the maintenance of natural genetic stocks through the establishment of a national network of forest ecological reserves.

Our Green Plan will bring important, leading-edge advances in technology to our partners in industry and the provinces.

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Our Green Plan responds to the concerns about global atmospheric changes. Forestry Canada's science programs will provide needed data on climate change, biodiversity, acid rain and fire management.

The Government of Canada will work hard to achieve a global convention on forests to help preserve all the world's forests.

And on a local basis our Green Plan will foster a community tree planting program to help all Canadians do their part for their environment. The goal of this plan is to plant 325 million trees in cities and towns across Canada — living symbols of Canadians' commitment to the future.

*Canada's goal: Shift the management of our forests from sustained yield to sustainable development.*

## *Agriculture*

Our agri-food industry involves almost two million Canadians in the growth, processing, distribution and retailing of food. Sales of primary food products alone amount to \$22 billion a year.

Agriculture depends on a healthy environment; the health of Canadians depends on secure, high quality, safe food supplies. Soil, water and air quality; pollution; waste management; climatic change — these present the agri-food industry with interwoven challenges and opportunities.

Current programs, such as the National Soil Conservation Program, include soil and water conservation and development of new technologies to resolve environmental problems.

In August 1990, federal and provincial ministers of agriculture adopted a framework for action on environmental sustainability in the agri-food sector.

Our Green Plan will enable the federal Minister of Agriculture to enter into a new environmental sustainability initiative in partnership with provinces and the private sector.

The initiative will include measures aimed at halting soil degradation, developing shelterbelts, providing stable supplies of clean water, enhancing compatibility between agriculture and wildlife,

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managing pollution, protecting and utilizing genetic resources, limiting greenhouse gas emissions, and improving energy efficiency on the farm.

*Canada's goal: Maintain and enhance the natural resources that the agri-food sector uses or affects, while ensuring environmental, economic and social integration.*

## *Fisheries*

Our vast inland and marine waters support a \$3.2-billion commercial fishing industry that employs 130,000 fishermen and plant workers. The resource is essential to many regional economies; it offers the main source of employment in some 1,500 coastal communities. For many aboriginal people, the fishery is both a source of food and an important element of their culture. It also provides recreational opportunities to more than five million Canadians annually.

Sustainability in our fisheries depends on sound harvesting practices and productive, unpolluted fish habitats.

However, agriculture, mining, forestry, transportation, energy development, urban growth and industry are damaging fish habitats. Almost half the shellfish growing areas in Nova Scotia and 500 square kilometres of prime shellfish harvesting areas in British Columbia are closed due to contamination.

What we have also learned is that fish are an important barometer of the *overall* state of the aquatic environment. Problems usually appear first among fish stocks.

We are now at the outer limits of our ability to sustain this vital resource.

Canada's Green Plan offers a three-part strategy to correct past problems and ensure long-term viability.

First, by 1992 the federal government will develop a National Sustainable Fisheries Policy and Action Plan. This will identify key issues and establish a national co-operative framework.

Second, the federal government will protect fish habitats by substantially increasing fines for violations and ensuring consistent application of the *Fisheries Act* everywhere in Canada. The powers of fishery officers will increase, as will their activities. Assessment,

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monitoring and research on toxic substances as they affect our fish and fish habitats will be expanded. The Government will work towards replacing lost fish habitats with new ones.

Third, the federal government will take action both nationally and internationally to promote the sustainable use of Canada's fisheries resource.

Nationally, our Green Plan will encourage more sustainable practices in our fisheries management, using innovative approaches that include selective gear technology and less damaging fishing gear. Our Green Plan advocates that today's "race for fish" syndrome be replaced by the more rational "transferable share" system. These shares can be transferred freely from one licence-holder to another. The federal government will also develop, by 1991, an action plan to implement the Recreational Fisheries Policy.

Internationally, Canada will continue to call on the European Community to follow the principles of sustainable development by curbing its excessive catch levels and the taking of juvenile fish in recognized nursery areas. Further, Canada wants Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization (NAFO) conservation measures to be enforced. After all, overfishing of Atlantic groundfish stocks by European fleets is not only prevalent, it is against the precepts of NAFO.

Canada wants driftnets banned globally and will press for alternate technologies to replace this wasteful harvesting.

*Canada's goal: The long-term sustainability of our fisheries resource.*

# *Special Spaces, Special Species*

Our wild places and wildlife across Canada are among the most precious gifts we have inherited — and vital to leave intact to future generations.

Preserving the beautiful and varied landscape of Canada is an important element of our Green Plan.

## *Protecting Natural Spaces*

The rich diversity of our old-growth forests, grasslands and wetlands is disappearing, gobbled up for urban development, agriculture and other human uses.

Canada's Green Plan will see these priceless resources preserved in our national parks system and as ecological reserves.

By 1996 the federal government will establish five new national parks and, by 2000, we will negotiate agreements for 13 more. By 1996 three new marine parks will be added. By 2000 sites for three additional marine parks will be identified.

The federal government will also work with the provinces to establish a network of forest ecological reserves, and will promote protection of wetlands.

*Canada's goal: Set aside as protected space 12% of the country.*

## *Wildlife*

Our wildlife is under stress. A total of 175 species are known to be at risk as a result of habitat loss and toxic chemical pollution. Almost half of these are threatened or endangered.

Many of our native and northern economies are based on wildlife. Our national economy also benefits: Canadians spend \$5 billion each year on outdoor activities, supporting 200,000 jobs.

In order for wildlife to live in the presence of humans, two things are needed. First, a place to live that meets wildlife's needs for food, shelter and reproduction. Second, a measure of protection from the harmful effects of humans, including effective enforcement of fines and penalties for offenders.

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Our Green Plan outlines a five-part National Wildlife Strategy to: improve wildlife science and health research; take action to protect wildlife diversity; introduce new legislation to attack poaching and illegal trading (such as the Wild Animal and Plant Protection Act); strengthen wildlife law enforcement; and conserve wildlife habitat.

Canada's Green Plan also commits us to work towards an international convention on biological diversity to help save the world's wildlife and plants.

*Canada's goal: Maintain and enhance the health and diversity of our wildlife and plants.*

### ***Our Historical Heritage***

Sadly, valuable historical resources outside our national historic sites system are deteriorating or threatened.

Canadians are committed to protecting their heritage. Our Green Plan will act swiftly on two fronts: fill the major thematic gaps in the system and continue to protect the resources already there.

The federal government intends to establish, by 2000, 15 new historic sites to commemorate key themes currently under-represented in the system.

*Canada's goal: Commemorate and protect the historical heritage that is important to all Canadians.*

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## *The Arctic... Our Unique Stewardship*

The vast northern regions of Canada contain many of our great rivers, extensive forests, open tundra and unspoiled wilderness. The Arctic makes up 40 per cent of our land mass and is surrounded by two-thirds of our marine coastline.

The Arctic is home to many native societies who depend on the land and waters for food, clothing and income. It is also home to an astonishing array of plants and animals.

We often think of our Arctic as remote, pristine and cold. It is no longer pristine; in fact, toxic contaminants are all too prevalent in the food chain.

We are committed to protecting the Arctic's delicate ecosystem as well as ensuring the sustainable use of its resources.

This will take a firm hand. Our Green Plan's Arctic Environmental Strategy, a five-year initiative, is being developed in partnership with northern governments and the peoples of the North. Details of the strategy will be found in a companion document that will be released by the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development.

Major elements of the Strategy will deal with Arctic contaminants, waste clean-up and management, and water quality and quantity. It will also expand research and information activities aimed at integrating environmental and economic issues and, perhaps most urgent, protecting the Arctic's ecosystems.

*Canada's goal: Preserve and enhance the integrity, health, biodiversity and productivity of our Arctic ecosystems.*

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# *The Whole Earth*

Pollution problems respect no boundary. Global warming, ozone depletion and acid rain demand actions here at home as well as abroad.

Canada has played a vital leadership role internationally. We can do more, however.

Canadians know that, as a privileged nation, we have an obligation to put our own house in order before we preach to others less blessed than ourselves.

Canada can and must play a key role in helping other nations understand that sustainable development will work to everyone's benefit.

## *Global Warming*

It may be getting warmer.

In a cold country like ours, that might seem a blessing. It is anything but. In fact, if we continue pumping out greenhouse gases (carbon dioxide, methane, etc.) at our present rate, scientists believe we could cause a warming rate of change faster than any other over the past 10,000 years with potentially dramatic impacts.

Over the past 200 years concentrations of greenhouse gases in the upper atmosphere have increased faster than at any previous time. Half the CO<sub>2</sub> added to our atmosphere in human history was emitted in just the past 30 years.

These greenhouse gases act as a buffer in our atmosphere, trapping the earth's heat. The rising temperatures could mean flooding on our coasts, heat waves and droughts on our prairies. They could even threaten the existence of some plants and animals.

While experts now believe some degree of warming is inevitable, there's no international consensus on just how much or how specifically to solve this problem. But Canada and most other western nations are not prepared to wait.

Our Green Plan, along with the National Action Strategy on Global Warming being developed in partnership by the federal and provincial governments will set Canada on the right track.

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The National Action Strategy is in three parts. It aims to (1) limit greenhouse gases from all sources, (2) help Canadians to anticipate and prepare for the potential effects of any warming that might occur, and (3) improve our scientific abilities to understand and predict this phenomenon.

Canada's Green Plan describes the actions the federal government will take in support of the strategy. Greenhouse gas emissions will be reduced through a wide range of actions, including measures to improve our energy efficiency and to promote alternatives to fossil fuels, and a community tree-planting program.

*Canada's goal: Stabilize national emissions of CO<sub>2</sub> and other greenhouse gases at 1990 levels by the year 2000.*

## *Acid Rain*

Acid rain contributes to health problems, particularly in our children. It has killed fish in some 150,000 lakes and threatens forestry by stripping trees, damages tourism and agriculture.

Eight in every 10 Canadians live in areas with high levels of this pollutant.

It comes from metal smelting in eastern Canada, from coal-burning utilities in Canada and the U.S., and millions of autos on both sides of the border.

In 1985 Canada put in place a national action plan to combat acid rain. We have succeeded in greatly reducing acid-rain-causing emissions, and we will achieve our national target of a 50% reduction by 1994.

Our Green Plan will ensure that acid rain controls are expanded, with emissions permanently capped in both eastern and western Canada.

But since half the damage in Canada is imported from the U.S. through emissions blown over our border, international action is also required. In 1990 the U.S. finally passed a comprehensive acid rain control program designed to reduce emissions there by 50% by the year 2000. Canada's Green Plan commits us to negotiating a Transboundary Air Quality Agreement with the Americans. This will commit each country to agreed-upon levels of sulphur dioxide and set up systems to deal with mutual problems such as smog and other airborne pollutants.

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Programs are not much good unless you know the actions work. Canada's Green Plan expands our verification systems to make sure that what we have agreed will happen *does* happen. This includes studies of the rate of lake, river and forest recovery and, by 1996, the effects on human health.

*Canada's goal: Cap acid-rain-related emissions in eastern Canada beyond 1994 through extended federal-provincial acid rain control agreements. In addition, establish a national emission cap by the year 2000.*

## **Ozone Depletion**

The sun's ultraviolet rays can cause cataracts and skin cancer, reduce crops and kill the plankton that makes up the base of the marine food chain. The ozone layer protects us from such harmful radiation.

Chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) and other chemicals are depleting the ozone umbrella. (For example, the loss approaches 50% over parts of the Antarctic.)

Canada is on the front lines in controlling these problems, playing a key role in the 1987 Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer. We are committed to eliminating CFCs by 1997. That is three years ahead of the world target.

Moreover, we have done far more than sign papers. We *already* reduced CFC use by 19% between the summers of 1989 and 1990!

Building on these successes, Canada's Green Plan will step up this program and support recovery and recycling of CFCs.

More research is needed, too. So, our Green Plan provides funds to increase monitoring and improve analysis and research.

As the polar regions are particularly susceptible, our Green Plan will establish a permanent observatory in the Arctic by 1992 to monitor the stratosphere. By the same year the Canadian Ozone Monitoring Program will be extended to provide regular reports across the country.

Our Green Plan will also strengthen verification and provide more international assistance. Particular attention will be paid to

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the plight of developing countries. Canada will contribute \$15 million to international efforts to help them find ways to improve their living standards without using CFCs.

*Canada's goal: Phase out the use of CFCs by 1997 and the use of methyl chloroform and other major ozone-depleting substances by the year 2000.*

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## *Environmental Emergencies*

We are shocked by the unpredictable, powerful disasters we impose on the environment: appalling oil spills, poisonous fires and the like. We are equally shocked when the environment imposes disasters on us: earthquakes, floods, tornadoes.

Our ability to respond to these disasters has improved. Several federal acts have reduced the risk of pollution emergencies. Federal agencies take the lead on containment, clean-up and remedial action. We have even signed international agreements of co-operation on oil spills.

Even so, it is inevitable that we will have to deal with major emergencies. Canada's Green Plan will give us the know-how and funding to get better prepared.

Our Green Plan recognizes that the ability of the Canadian Armed Forces to respond quickly to military emergencies makes them well suited to respond to civil ones.

In such situations, Canadian Forces personnel and their equipment could be swiftly deployed anywhere in the country. By 1993, the federal government will develop and define the role of our Armed Forces in providing assistance to civil authorities in response to environmental disasters.

As a result of the *Nestucca* and *Exxon Valdez* oil spills, the federal government ordered a complete review of our ability to respond to marine spills. The resulting report yielded many excellent recommendations — everything from radar improvement to on-board inspections of foreign tankers.

Our Green Plan spill response initiatives are the first steps in the Government's overall actions on spill prevention and spill response in Canada. As a start, the Government will consult the marine industry on the phasing in of double-hulled tankers for Canadian waters. And the Government will re-evaluate the compensation levels and potential uses of the existing Ship-Source Oil Pollution Fund.

Our Green Plan will enhance preventative measures by, among other steps, improving radar and vessel traffic control facilities. Our spill response capability for oil and chemical spills in marine waters will be enhanced.

Canada's Green Plan will also initiate a major program to deal with spills on land or in fresh waters, and with toxic gas releases into the air.

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Working with industry and other governments in Canada, the Government will promote new guidelines, regulations and public education. By the end of 1993, more and better-trained emergency response crews will be in place across the country. They will be supported by top-quality technology.

As for natural disasters, we know they cannot be prevented. But we believe a great deal more can be done to reduce loss of life and damage through quicker warnings and response. Our Green Plan will improve everything from early detection to appropriate responses to natural disasters.

Our Green Plan will upgrade our natural hazard prediction systems, including those for major airborne pollution events such as volcanic eruptions. Green Plan measures include: four Doppler radar stations up and running by the end of 1996; a national television environmental warning system that automatically superimposes emergency information on every TV screen in the country; and automated local observation networks to monitor natural disasters the area is prone to — for example, automated water-level monitoring equipment in flood-prone urban centres.

*Canada's goal: Respond quickly and effectively to threats posed by pollution emergencies due to human activity and naturally occurring environmental emergencies.*

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# *Better Environmental Decision-Making*

## *Partnerships Equal Solutions*

Our Green Plan asks us to start thinking in a new way; thinking in terms of *all Canadians* taking responsibility for our actions.

Thinking as partners. From the classroom to the boardroom. From union halls to city hall.

In fact, co-ordinated national action is critical if all women and men in Canada are to enjoy a consistent level of healthy environmental quality.

Canada's Green Plan will strengthen existing partnerships and help forge new ones.

*Canada's goal: Strengthen existing environmental partnerships within Canada, while also building new ones.*

### *The Federal/Provincial/Territorial Partnership*

Above all, co-ordinated national action means the federal, provincial and territorial governments working together on common goals.

Although Canada's Constitution does not specifically allocate environmental powers, in practice each level of government has jurisdiction by extension. For example, federal jurisdiction over fisheries allows Ottawa to bring in environmental legislation on fish. Provincial jurisdiction over local property makes the provinces the leading authorities on such matters as solid waste disposal and forestry management.

The Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment (CCME) has proved a most effective forum and will continue to play a pivotal role.

However, Green Plan consultations made it clear that Canadians want even better co-ordination. And they want to know who is responsible.

As part of Canada's Green Plan, the federal government will initiate efforts to harmonize environmental legislation, policies and programs across all political jurisdictions. With the provinces, the Government will help develop standards, strategies and linkages to ensure the requirements of both levels of government are met without delay, overlap or duplication.

The CCME Statement on Interjurisdictional Cooperation on Environmental Matters sets the framework for our joint actions.

## *Native Partnerships*

Native groups have always understood the importance of environmental stewardship. Our native peoples have seen increasing changes to their natural environment from pollution and resource development. The federal government will assist native communities in addressing environmental problems.

## *Other Vital Partnerships*

The federal government will continue to build productive partnerships with all stakeholders: environmental groups, women's organizations, other non-government organizations and business.

Environmental groups play an important role in spurring the policy process. We call them ENGOs (Environmental Non-Government Organizations) and our Green Plan will help support their commitment in two ways.

Canada's Green Plan increases funding to support small, regional groups and increase our annual contribution to the Canadian Environmental Network.

The Government will also work with all environmental stakeholders, including native peoples, business, labour, academia and women's organizations, through regular consultation and information exchange.

Business is an essential partner. Its research capacity and scientific know-how are vital to achieving solutions.

There are tremendous opportunities for Canadian companies to develop and sell new environmental technologies, a "hot" market now valued at over \$7 billion each year. To help, the Government

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will foster development of new technologies, improve market analysis and exchange the latest information.

Our Green Plan also expands existing programs that are successfully promoting community and individual action, including the Environmental Partners Fund and the Environmental Choice Program.

### *A Special Role for Youth*

As tomorrow's stewards, young Canadians must continue the job we are starting. They must grow to understand the changes that must be made, and participate in the solutions.

To that end, our Green Plan sets up the Canadian Youth Advisory Council on Environment and Development to provide the Minister of the Environment with ongoing advice on issues and programs.

Of special interest is the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development to be held in Brazil in 1992. A special Canadian Youth Secretariat on Environment and Development will be set up to involve our young people in this most important world event.

### *Ensuring Women's Perspective*

Women have played, and continue to play, a crucial role in environmental issues. The Government of Canada recognizes that women must be full partners in our Green Plan.

### *Environmental Information for Better Decisions*

One thing that is certain is that our environment and our economy are mutually dependent. This means that our traditional National Economic Accounts (the Gross National Product, for example) should be adjusted to take into account the real costs and benefits to Canada of decisions affecting our environment.

Pilot accounts are being set up for two natural resources. Canada's Green Plan will see that a draft environmental accounting framework will be ready by 1993. Regular publication begins in 1996.

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As our understanding of our environmental problems grows, our choices become more complex. In order for us to make those choices wisely, we will need the best, the clearest, the most up-to-date information we can get our hands on.

A simple set of clear indicators is also needed. That is why, by 1993, our Green Plan will see developed a comprehensive range of indicators to measure the progress toward our goals.

The second national State of the Environment Report will be produced in 1991. It will be tabled in Parliament. The National State of the Environment Reporting Agency will be established by 1994.

*Canada's goal: Provide timely, accurate and accessible information to enable Canadians to make environmentally sensitive decisions.*

## *Environmental Citizenship*

Canadians are increasingly knowledgeable and concerned about environmental issues.

The Canadian Environmental Citizenship Program will challenge Canadians to act on their concerns. Campaigns will be designed to increase environmental awareness and promote public participation on such issues as climate change, waste management, water pollution and water conservation.

*Canada's goal: Develop an environmentally literate society — one in which citizens are equipped with the knowledge, skills and values necessary for action.*

## *New Science*

Environmental science provides all of us — citizens, government and industry — with tools needed to help us reach a state of sustainable development.

Through Canada's Green Plan, the Government is launching a five-year Environmental Science and Technology Action Plan that will explore new directions in solving our domestic and global problems.

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The Plan will support the Canadian Global Change Program. This program includes all aspects of global change and is the most ambitious research program ever attempted in this country.

It will fund scholarships in the environmental sciences. A full slate of scholarships and grants will be in place by 1992.

The Government will also work with its provincial partners and the private sector to support the demonstration and commercialization of environmental technologies. The federal government will establish the Technology Development Program, an Environmental Technology Network, and the Environmental Technology Commercialization Program.

Our Green Plan also includes the Environmental Innovation Program, which will promote Canadian environmental innovation outside government.

*Canada's goal: Strengthen the nation's environmental science and technology, with a special emphasis on understanding regional ecosystems.*

## *Legislation, Regulations and the Market*

Legislation, regulations, and their enforcement all play an essential role in achieving sustainable development. Market forces are also powerful instruments for change.

Proclaimed in 1988, the *Canadian Environmental Protection Act* has given us an excellent framework for progress.

All environmental regulations follow the principles set out in the federal government's Regulatory Reform Strategy of 1986 — openness, fairness, efficiency and accountability. The process is thorough and takes as long as three years so that the public and various stakeholders can have their say.

But legislation and regulation are only as good as our ability to enforce them.

Over the next five years the Government will strengthen this ability through a wide range of remedial and preventive measures. Environmental inspection, information exchange and investigations will be strengthened. The Government will work in close co-operation with the provinces to avoid duplication and increase efficiency.

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Poaching and smuggling will be severely dealt with. Special measures will be taken to enforce the *Migratory Birds Convention Act* and the proposed Wild Animal and Plant Protection Act. By 1993 regional intelligence and investigation units will be established to improve enforcement in our national parks.

Economic incentives can be effective tools in promoting environmentally sound behaviour. They include subsidies, tradeable emission permits, deposit/refund systems for the control of waste products and appropriate pricing of natural resources.

However, application can be complex; not all the answers are in. To get them, Canada's Green Plan sets up an independent economic research program into the use of such instruments. We will also release in 1991 a discussion paper on economic instruments.

*Canada's goal: The balanced use of strong and effective environmental laws, with market-based approaches for environmental protection.*

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## *Starting In Our Own House*

Governments cannot preach to others what they are not prepared to do themselves.

If governments do not change from a “business as usual” approach, if we do not *prove* that we are part of the solution and not adding to the problem, then Canada’s Green Plan will not work.

*We are prepared to become one of the most environmentally sensitive jurisdictions in the developed world.* And we have taken steps to ensure this happens.

We have already made some important changes. The Minister of the Environment chairs the new Cabinet Committee on the Environment and sits as a member of the key Cabinet Committee on Priorities and Planning.

### *Environmental Impact Assessment*

Major reforms have been introduced into the federal environmental assessment and review process. These will broaden the scope of the process and strengthen public participation.

More important, legislation will entrench our obligation to integrate environmental considerations into all federal project planning.

A new federal agency — the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency — will replace the Federal Environmental Assessment Review Office. The CEAA will assist the government to administer the new process and report on its implementation. What’s more, new funding is available to ensure that all federal departments and agencies are able to fulfil their obligations.

A Participant Funding Program will make certain that the public and various stakeholders will be able to take part in the environmental assessment process.

Some of the federal government’s *non-environment* policies could also have an unintended but adverse impact on the very environment we are trying to protect. Since June 1990, environmental impact assessments have been mandatory for all policy and program initiatives coming before Cabinet. Canada is one of only a few countries in the world to scrutinize its policies for environmental impact.

Building on these actions, Canada’s Green Plan will also initiate in 1991 a thorough review of the environmental implications of all

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existing statutes, policies, programs and regulations. Modifications will be proposed where necessary.

## ***The Code of Environmental Stewardship***

The federal government is a big organization.

It purchases \$9 billion a year in goods and services. It has over 50,000 buildings — from offices to laboratories to military bases. It employs 585,000 public servants, military personnel and Crown corporation staff.

So it is important for Canada's biggest organization to meet or exceed the environmental standards it sets for others.

And our Green Plan will make certain we do. In 1991 the federal government will adopt a Code of Environmental Stewardship, which will cover all areas of federal activity.

Targets and schedules will be set for improving our stewardship in many different areas. For example, the federal government is a heavy consumer of energy, both for heating and transport.

Environmental audits are potentially important tools by which to assess the success of environmental programs. They tell us whether what we are doing is environmentally right and make sure we learn from our mistakes.

In collaboration with the Comptroller General, all federal departments and agencies will put in place procedures for environmental auditing.

*Canada's goal: Ensure that all of its operations and procedures meet or exceed national targets and schedules for sustaining our environment.*

## ***That Is Our Green Plan***

It is a national action plan for reversing the damage we are doing to our environment today, sustaining development tomorrow, and securing a healthy environment and a prosperous economy.

It is a comprehensive plan, setting new programs, policies and regulations on a broad range of environmental issues. And it sets out clear targets and schedules by which to gauge our progress.

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And our Green Plan is an ambitious plan. Achieving its goals will require the efforts of all Canadians. It is a challenge-- a challenge that can be met through commitment, partnership and consultation.

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